

## Message Text

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21  
ORIGIN DPW-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 RSC-01 /006 R

DRAFTED BY:D/PW:FASIEVERTS: GM

APPROVED BY:S/PW:FASIEVERTS

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R 072340Z DEC 73  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

UNCLAS STATE 240507

FOLLOWING TEL SENT SECSTATE FROM TEHRAN 12 NOVEMBER REPEATED

QTE UNCLAS TEHRAN 7950

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ICRC, IR

SUBJ: STANTON STATEMENT TO INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT BY AMERICAN RED  
CROSS CHAIRMAN, DR, FRANK STANTON, INTRODUCING  
RESOLUTION ON ACCOUNTING FOR THE DEAD AND MISSING IN  
ARMED CONFLICTS, NOVEMBER 12, IN GENERAL COMMISSION OF  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS. PLEASE  
PASS TEXT TO AMERICAN RED CROSS NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

2. BEGIN TEXT: THE SEARCH FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE  
WHO ARE MISSING DURING AND AFTER ARMED CONFLICTS IS  
ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE NAME OF THE RED CROSS. THE PROBLEM IS PRESENT  
IN THE AFTERMATH OF VIRTUALLY EVERY ARMED CONFLICT:  
WE ALL RECALL PICTURES OF RELATIVES STANDING AT TRAIN  
STATIONS, OR AT DOCKSIDE, AS PRISONERS-OF-WAR RETURNED  
FROM CAPTIVITY, WITH SIGNS ASKING QTE DOES ANYONE  
HAVE INFORMATION ON MY SON UNQTE OR FATHER OR  
HUSBAND, AS THE CASE MAY BE? THE ENDING OF ARMED  
HOSTILITIES IS ALWAYS WELCOME -- BUT FOR THE FAMILIES  
OF THE MISSING IT IS A TIME OF SPECIAL DIFFICULTY.  
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THE CERTAINTY OF KNOWING A LOVED ONE HAS DIED WOULD

SEEM PREFERABLE TO THE DRAWN-OUT ANGUISH OF NOT KNOWING  
THE FATE OF ONE WHO IS MISSING IN ACTION.

THE RED CROSS HAS A NATURAL AND TRADITIONAL ROLE TO  
PLAY IN RESOLVING THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM. FOR  
OVER 100 YEARS, INFORMATION BUREAUX ORGANIZED BY THE  
RED CROSS HAVE HELPED FIND AND EXCHANGE INFORMATION  
ON THOSE WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY AND OTHER MISSING IN  
CONNECTION WITH ARMED CONFLICTS.

THE PURPOSE OF THE RESOLUTION WE HAVE JOINED IN  
PROPOSING IS TO REMIND THE PARTIES TO ARMED CONFLICTS  
--WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCE AND WHEREVER THEY MAY BE  
-- OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM,  
AND TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL  
SOCIETIES, THE ICRC, AND THE TRACING AGENCIES AND  
THE PROTECTING POWERS IN RESOLVING IT. THE RESOLUTION  
CALLS ON PARTIES TO ARMED CONFLICTS TO HELP LOCATE  
AND CARE FOR THE GRAVES OF THE DEAD, TO FACILITATE  
THE DISINTERMENT AND RETURN OF REMAINS, AND TO  
EXCHANGE INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE MISSING.

IT APPLIES EQUALLY TO SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS,  
INCLUDING, FOR EXAMPLE, JOURNALISTS. THIS  
RESOLUTION COVERS PERSONS OF ALL PARTIES -- INCLUDING  
THOSE NOT PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT.

THESE TASKS ARE TRADITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE  
PARTIES TO ARMED CONFLICTS -- AND IT IS A RED CROSS  
TRADITION TO HELP RESOLVE THEM. THERE CAN NEVER BE  
100 PERCENT SUCCESS. BUT THERE SHOULD BE RECOGNITION OF  
THE HUMANITARIAN OBLIGATION OF PARTIES TO ARMED  
CONFLICTS. I HOPE THIS CONFERENCE WILL SUPPORT THIS  
RESOLUTION UNANIMOUSLY. END TEXT. HELMS UNQTE  
KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MIA, KIA, MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 DEC 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973STATE240507  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** D/PW:FASIEVERTS: GM  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19731237/aaaabauk.tel  
**Line Count:** 96  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ORIGIN DPW  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** willialc  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 OCT 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17-Oct-2001 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2002 by willialc>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** STANTON STATEMENT TO INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE  
**TAGS:** MOPS, PFOR, VS, ICRC  
**To:** SAIGON  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005